



February 4, 2011

**Ex Parte**

Marlene H. Dortch  
Secretary  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th Street, S.W.  
Room TW-A325  
Washington, D.C. 20554

**Re: CG Docket 09-158 Consumer Information and Disclosure; CC Docket 98-170  
Truth in Billing Format; and WC Docket 04-36 IP-Enabled Services**

Dear Ms. Dortch,

On February 1, 2010, John Breyault, Vice President of Public Policy, Telecommunications and Fraud with the National Consumers League (NCL) met with Bill Freedman, CGB; Elizabeth Lyle, WTB; Joel Taubenblatt, WTB; Colleen Heitkamp, CGB; Kurt Schroeder, CGB; Veronica Etheridge, CGB; Nancy Stevenson, CGB; Mark Stone, CGB; Arthur Scrutchins, CGB; Joel Gurin, CGB; Nicole McGinnis, WTB; Christine McGinnis, WTB; Christina Clearwater, WTB; Katie Costello, MB; Richard Smith, CGB; and Lynn Ratnavale, CGB; Rebecca Hirselj, CGB.

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss consumer experiences and concerns at various stages of their relationships with telecommunications carriers, including shopping, plan inception, billing and switching services. We discussed a variety of services, including wireless telephone, broadband Internet, satellite and cable television and bundled service packages.

NCL expressed that consumers are frequently frustrated at each stage of their relationships with providers of the above-mentioned services. In particular, we stressed that consumers are often confused by the additional taxes, fees and surcharges that are often added to their bills, raising the total cost of service significantly and making apples-to-apples comparison shopping difficult. We noted that while line item costs are generally listed in detail on consumers' bills, the sheer volume of fees and lack of clarity on bills often contributes to consumer confusion. In addition, we noted that consumers are often frustrated when the bottom-

line cost of their bills are significantly higher than the carriers' heavily-advertised prices. We noted that as carriers increasingly encourage their subscribers to opt for paperless billing and automatic payment these issues are likely to be magnified.

To address these issues, we urged the Commission to undertake research specifically into the causes and potential remedies of consumer confusion at the various stages of the customer experience. We suggested that a requirement for carriers to disclose in clear terms how much and why bills have changed from month to month would be a pro-consumer step by the Commission.

This notice is being filed pursuant to Section 1.1206 of the Commission's rules. If you need additional information or have any questions about this filing, please contact me at (202) 207-2819.

Respectfully submitted,

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
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John Breyault  
Vice President of Public Policy, Telecommunications and Fraud  
National Consumers League

CC: Bill Freedman  
Elizabeth Lyle  
Joel Taubenblatt  
Colleen Heitkamp  
Kurt Schroeder  
Veronica Etheridge  
Nancy Stevenson  
Mark Stone  
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